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MCLG 362H.01: Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy

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Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy

(MCLG/PHIL/LS 362H - CRN 34302)

Class Meetings: Liberal Arts 201, Tuesday & Thursday 11:10-12:30

Instructor: Hayden W. Ausland (Classics/MCLL)

LA 424 (243-2125)

This course will survey the ancient Western philosophical tradition. We will examine key works of ancient Greek philosophers from the time of Thales (fl. 585 BC) through Aristotle before studying derivative philosophies of the Hellenistic and Roman eras up to ca. 500 AD.

Class will be conducted as a lecture with room for some discussion, and the coursework will call upon the student's powers of careful and critical reading, and of written and possibly oral discourse. On Thursday, March 23rd there will be a mid-term examination in class. A two-hour final exam on a similar model will occur at the time and place provided in the university's official schedule. On Tuesdays of the semester's fourth and eighth weeks (February 21st and March 21st) short papers (three pages maximum) will be due on assignments announced a week previous. A slightly more ambitious paper will be due on Tuesday of the twelfth week (April 25th).

Written exams will be marked with an eye mainly to accuracy and critical understanding. Prepared papers will be evaluated rigorously for their mechanical, as well as substantive, elements. Students' individual course grades will be based upon their papers, tests, and other indications of effective academic engagement. It is helpful to meet all deadlines.

Projected order of treatment with coordinated schedule of assigned readings:

- Week 1: General introduction; natural history before Socrates
 (Aristophanes, *Clouds*)
 (Supplemental: Freeman 11, 12, 13, 31, 64)
 (Secondary: Hadot c. 1)
- Week 2: The Sophists and ancient medicine
 (Freeman 24, 79-81; Hippocratic texts)
 (Suppl.: "Greek Medicine" excerpts)
 (Secondary: Hadot c. 2)
- Week 3: The Platonic Socrates
 (Plato: *Apology* and *Gorgias*)
 (Suppl.: Freeman 21, 59, 82-83; Gorgias, *Palamedes*)
 (Secondary: Hadot c. 3)
- Week 4: The Platonic Philosophy
 (Plato, *Symposium* & *Phaedrus*)
 (Suppl.: Freeman 84-86, 22, 28; Gorgias, *Not-Being* & *Helen*)
 (Secondary: Hadot c. 4)
- Week 5: The Pythagorean Plato
 (Plato, *Phaedo* & *Timaeus*, 1st. part)
 (Suppl.: Freeman 1-2, 15-20, 25-27, 40-58)
 (Secondary: Hadot c. 5)

- Week 6: Aristotle's philosophical method
(Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* 1.1; *Topics* I & *Soph. Elench.*, part)
(Suppl.: Freeman 29-30)\
(Secondary: Hadot c. 6)
- Week 7: Aristotelian natural philosophy
(Aristotle, *Physics* II; *De Anima* II.1-5 & III.3-13)
- Week 8: Aristotelian metaphysics
(Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I & XII)
- [spring break]
- Week 9: Aristotelian and Isocratean rhetorical theory
(Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I.1-5 & II.18-22; Isocrates, selects.)
- Week 10: Competing Hellenistic Schools of Philosophy
(Primary: Cicero, *On Ends*)
(Suppl. Diogenes Laertius 3-13 & 424-79)
(Secondary: Hadot c. 7)
- Week 11: Imperial Roman Stoicism
(Seneca, *The Firmness of the Wise & The Happy Life*)
(Suppl. Diogenes Laertius 259-337)
(Secondary: Hadot c. 8)
- Week 12: Greek Skepticism
(Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhonian Outlines* I & selects.)
(Supplemental: Diogenes Laertius, 163-80 & 402-23)
(Secondary: Hadot c. 9)
- Week 13: Neo-Platonism
(Plotinus, *Enneads* I.6, IV.8)
(Suppl. Plotinus, *Enneads* V.1, III.8)
(Secondary: Hans Jonas article)
- Week 14: Christian Philosophy
(Augustine, *On the Happy Life*)
(Supplemental: Boethius, *On the Person and Two Natures*)
(Secondary: Hadot c. 10-12)

The Bookstore in the University center has been asked to stock various books containing the works of Plato, Aristotle (except the *Topics*), Cicero, Sextus Empiricus, and Plotinus. It also stocks the secondary work by Pierre Hadot (*What is Ancient Philosophy?*). Kathleen Freeman's *Ancilla to the Presocratic Philosophers* and the remaining texts listed above will be on electronic reserve at the Mansfield Library and also as photocopies at Denny's (on the NE corner of Higgins & South). Several of these, and also some other secondary works, will be available on traditional reserve at Mansfield.

Grades of incomplete are not recorded in this course.

The instructor will assume a familiarity with academic standards, rules and procedures set out in the University catalogue, the Schedule of classes, and Student Conduct Code.